

Standard 4000-08

Writing

Writing is a process of selecting, organizing, and developing ideas; expressing ideas in effective language; arranging them in logical sequences; and presenting them in standard forms of spelling, handwriting, or word processing. We write to discover what we know, think, and believe, and to communicate with others.

Research shows that learning to write well requires frequent practice. Students who learn to write as a process of planning, drafting, and revising develop fluency and control as writers. When students write on topics they care about, for varied audiences and a range of purposes, they find writing purposeful.

Just as students need to be exposed to a wide range of reading materials, students need to develop skills with different writing modes/forms. Research has shown that 50 percent of all the writing produced during high school occurs outside the English class. Developing writing across all subject areas, using different writing modes/forms while integrating content knowledge with personal knowledge, is essential. Writing should begin in the elementary school years, with continuous development throughout a student's school career. Writing is a lifelong powerful tool.

The usefulness of teaching penmanship/handwriting as part of the writing process is really debatable in today's high-tech society. While students are becoming proficient with technology tools at an early age, legible handwriting is a practical asset still needed today. Three-fourths of all elementary schoolwork is still done by hand, and tests often include essay questions. There is little doubt that a minimal amount of time should be devoted to handwriting instruction and practice. Teachers should allocate sufficient time to teach students the skill of penmanship in order to produce legible documents with fluency/automaticity.

The following are possible suggestions and not all-inclusive:

Teacher Delivery

1. Provide explicit instruction in writing through shared, interactive, and guided writing.
2. Teach writing as a recursive process of pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing/publishing.
3. Provide students with frequent opportunities and ample time to write.
4. Confer with students, validating strengths and teaching skills at point of need.
5. Teach students to write in different genres for different purposes.
6. Provide instruction in both large and small groups, utilizing mini-lessons as needed.
7. Provide brief, explicit instruction to help students produce letters automatically and retrieve forms rapidly from memory.

Standard 4000-08 Writing (Continued)

Teacher Delivery (Continued)

8. Devote minimal amounts of time to penmanship instruction and practice.
9. Provide small group instruction for students who are having trouble forming letters in manuscript or cursive.
10. Be consistent by following district instructional style of penmanship (e.g., vertical/traditional, slanted/italicized).
11. Consider teaching a penmanship style most like print in books to students with disabilities in reading.
12. Allow students the choice of manuscript or cursive when using penmanship as a tool for writing.
13. Remember that the goal of penmanship instruction and practice is to produce legible documents created with fluency/automaticity.
14. Provide instruction and practice in penmanship for students to read a variety of styles of print/fonts, including cursive.

Assessment

Formal:

Approved state, district, and school assessments.

Informal:

1. Six-Traits Writing, Six-Traits Plus 1, writing assessments.
2. Rubrics and scoring guides.
3. Holistic writing assessments.
4. Developmental checklists in writing.
5. Writing conferences.

Differentiation

1. Allow students to dictate stories.
2. Simplify students' writing assignments.
3. Allow students to use a word processor.
4. Allow students to write first drafts in their primary language.
5. Assist students in creating storyboards or other illustrations for stories before writing.
6. Provide students with extra time to complete assignments.
7. Allow and encourage students to work with peers.
8. Encourage students to write from self-selected topics.

Standard 4000-08 Writing (Continued)

Differentiation (Continued)

9. Encourage interest and enthusiasm for writing.
10. Provide students with frequent opportunities for purposeful writing.
11. Encourage and foster accountability for Six-Traits Writing.
12. Develop students' writing in all modes/forms.
13. Facilitate students' utilization of technology and technology tools to produce writing products.
14. Encourage students to use graphic organizers to organize and plan their writing.
15. Encourage students to honor individual student writing efforts, noting positive elements.
16. Allow students choice with forms and styles of penmanship.
17. Allow students to use technology.
18. Emphasize legibility, not form, with penmanship.

Home Connections

1. Encourage parents to foster writing exploration by providing a variety of materials.
2. Encourage students to write daily at home (e.g., logs, journals).
3. Encourage children to share their writing at home.
4. Encourage writing at home by using a message board to communicate.
5. Encourage functional writing at home (e.g., thank you notes, messages, labels).
6. Facilitate the appropriate use of technology and writing tools in the home (e.g., computer, dictionary).
7. Encourage parents to act as role models for writing, as well as noting other models for writing found in the home (e.g., authors' writing, newspapers, letters, advertisements).
8. Encourage parents to communicate the importance of legibility, not form and style, with penmanship.
9. Communicate to parents the district preferred style for letter formation to eliminate early confusion for preschoolers and students beginning the letter formation process.
10. Communicate to parents the value of technology as a tool for writing in today's world.

